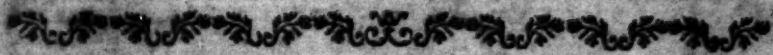
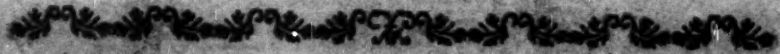


1828



THE
FAIR ORPHAN,
A
COMIC OPERA.

(PRICE 1s. 6d.)





✓

T H E
FAIR ORPHAN,
A
COMIC OPERA,
OF THREE ACTS:

As performed at the
Theatre in Lynn,

B Y
Mr. G. A. STEVENS'S
Company of Comedians.

Tempore crevit amor,
Ex æquo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.
OVID. MET.

LYNN: Printed by W. WHITTINGHAM, for
W. Nicoll, in St. Paul's Church-yard, and
R. Baldwin, in Pater-noster-row, LONDON.

MDCCLXXI.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

COMIC OF THE
OF THE

BY



THE

Mr. J. A. S. ...
...

...

...

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of this incorrect piece, conscious of its insufficiency to stand a critical investigation, can make no other apology for it than the consideration of its being the first flight of juvenile fancy; at the same time he is very sensible that neither time, place, age, sex, nor condition, can justify, in the eyes of the world, the publication of an imperfect performance. As a writer, therefore, he does not expect to escape the censure of the critic, tho' as a man he may be entitled to some indulgence. The candor of a man of genius will sometimes induce him to overlook the incorrectness of a first essay, which his judgment as a critic would not otherwise suffer to pass unnoticed; but it is rather an unfortunate circumstance that all CRITICS are not men of genius, nor always men of letters or understanding. And, as Mr. Pope elegantly expresses it,

'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But of the two less dang'rous is th' offence
To tire our patience than mislead our sense.
In poets as true genius is but rare,
True taste as seldom is the critics share.

PROLOGUE,

By the AUTHOR :

Spoken by *Master Blanchard*.

SURE man was ne'er with hopes and fears oppress'd,
Great as now rack our tim'rous bardling's breast!
Fain would he tread the slipp'ry road to Fame,
And from the rust of time preserve a name;
Up fam'd Parnassus' steepy heights would run,
And quaff the magic streams of Helicon;
But when his hopes have reach'd Apollo's fane,
Slap comes a doubt, and whirls 'em down again.

Thus did you never see, ye lovely fair,
A bird, ere first it flutters thro' the air,
With half-fledg'd wings expanded, oft essay
To quit, yet trembling clasp, the yielding spray?——
And did the sight ne'er to your bosoms bring
A wish, to aid th' advent'rous nestling's wing?——
Yes, it was so:——those speaking eyes impart
The tender feelings of a gen'rous heart.
Our bard must, then, for your protection sue;
His first, weak effort is design'd for you;
For you the artless scene he humbly draws,
And 'tis from you he hopes to gain applause.

So let it be:——now what d've think I said
About this Madam Muse's maidenhead,
This first-born bantling of the author's brain?——
Why, 'faith, I call'd him coward, flat and plain.

Zounds!

P R O L O G U E.

Zounds! fir, said I, throw off these idle fears,
 And ring a peal of thunder in their ears!
 Write a smart prologue, full of fine-turn'd wit,
 Such as will suit the critics in the pit;
 Lard it with smut, to please yon high-thron'd doxies,
 And light your Attic fire, to *smoke* the boxes; [pointing to the Gallery.]
 Burnish it o'er with Latin, French, and Greek,
 To make 'em stare——then give it *me*——to speak.
 I'll be your champion, or I'll plead your cause,
 Draw my dread sword; or claim the poets' laws;
 I'll sneak, or be a buck, strut and look big,
 Or look like——*nothing*, in a monstrous wig:
 Nay, never doubt——tho' I'm a puny elf,
Garrick was once as little as myself;
 And would it be so wondrous strange to see
 Something like *Garrick* rant and rage in me?

Thus have I tried to urge the fearful wight,
 To claim indulgence, or exert his might;
 To crack a jest, or cut a keener gibe
 Plump on the carping hypercritic tribe;
 To throw some nonsense to the gaping gallery,
 And touch the boxes with sarcastic raillery;
 But, as he would not say a word about it,
 Both you and I must rest content without it;
 Therefore, farewell——I give him up to you——
 Correct his errors, praise where praise is due;
 “Laugh where you must, be candid where you can,”
 And spare the poet, where you'd spare the man.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

SIR JOHN WORTHY,	<i>Mr. Jackson.</i>
SIR CHARLES AIRY,	<i>Mr. Wilks.</i>
LORD LEER,	<i>Mr. Blanchard.</i>
PATRICK,	<i>Mr. Egan.</i>
SIMON,	<i>Mr. T. Jackson.</i>

W O M E N.

LADY WORTHY,	<i>Mrs. Sweeny.</i>
LAURA,	<i>Mrs. Hoole.</i>
BELINDA,	<i>Mrs. Day.</i>
DIANA,	<i>Mrs. Herbert.</i>

S C E N E the Country.

T H E

The Fair Orphan.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

A Summer House, in a Garden.

LADY WORTHY, LAURA.

LADY WORTHY.

YES, my dear, the study of nature is certainly the most agreeable, as well as instructing science—but we must change the subject, as I am going to apprize you of a circumstance on which your future welfare is very much dependent. I need not tell you how dear that is to me.—Ever since I had the misfortune to lose my daughter, in whom I placed the centre of my domestic felicity, I have had the pleasing consolation to find in you another daughter.—Your evenness of disposition, engaging conversation, and early attachment to virtue, have endeared you to me beyond expression; and, I flatter myself, since you suffered the heavy loss of a kind, indulgent mother, my adoption of you, setting aside the tender ties of nature, has not been less a compensation to you.

B

LAURA.

2 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

L A U R A.

Your ladyship's goodness has ever exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and my highest deserts; tho' it has been, and ever shall be, the summit of my ambition to endeavor, by all the little services in my power, to merit such unparalleled generosity.

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

I am entirely satisfied, as to that, and beg you would not repeat it.—I have now to inform you that a person of very exalted rank has made overtures to me, on your behalf, offering you his hand, and a participation of his fortune.—I must confess his person is not the greatest recommendation in his favor; yet the flattering prospect, of my dear girl's being placed in so lofty a station, has had too much weight with me to be resisted; and I have, accordingly, promised him an interview with you this very day.—Don't misunderstand me, Laura; I don't mean to force your inclinations, in the least; only I would have you act as will become the high idea he has entertained of you.

L A U R A.

This additional proof of your ladyship's kindness and affection quite overwhelms me.—Be assured, madam, that no particular inclinations of my own can or shall actuate me—every thing I have, or can be supposed to have, I derive from your ladyship, and it will be my greatest happiness to be disposed of, as you shall think most proper for me.

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

But, my dear, I much fear this trial will put your utmost obedience to the stretch—the person who intends you the honor, is lord Leer—his
lord-

lordship, you know, is in years, and, I am but too certain, young girls, like you, have a peculiar antipathy to age, however dignified by title, station, or estates.

L A U R A.

It gives me pleasure, madam, to find you so agreeably mistaken—it is quite indifferent to me, I assure you, how I may be disposed of, provided it be in compliance with your ladyship's injunctions; to which gratitude alone will ever enforce an implicit obedience.—The only objection I have, is the regret I shall feel in being separated from you, my benefactress, to whom I am bound, by every tie of filial affection.

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

That, too, almost staggers my resolution—but it is for the lasting honor of my child, and every other argument must, therefore, be dispensed with—Besides, when my son comes home, the agreeable intercourse we shall keep up with you and my lord, will serve to chase away the dull, melancholy hours, which your absence would otherwise create.

L A U R A.

That assurance, madam, flatters me too much—the very thought of receiving the honor of such a further ratification of your ladyship's esteem, fills my heart with a vanity unknown to it before.—Yet, methinks I would be ever with you.

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

Well, my dear, but that must not be, for your own sake.—But, come, we must think of preparing to receive his lordship—I heartily wish you may sustain the fond essay upon that philosophic mind of yours—I cannot think of supernatu-

THE FAIR ORPHAN,

ral things—but you must have at heart the permanency of the intended honor, and banish idle prejudices,

L A U R A.

Fear not, madam—I have nothing to apprehend from the prejudices you allude to—the education you have been pleased to give me, has set me far above such romantic flights of fancy.

A I R I.

*Gratitude, my soul possessing,
Banishes each softer claim;
Happy in so choice a blessing,
I revere the sacred flame.*

*May nor pride, nor inclination,
Its just dictates disapprove;
Round it may each other passion
In concentric order move.*

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

Indeed, Laura, that stoical resolution of yours surprizes me much.—Oh! I thought I had something else to say to you—I have a present to make you—this bracelet, which I have thought proper to keep from you 'till this time, for many reasons, contains the picture of a relation of yours—I would give you some further account of it, but—let me see—it's eleven o'clock—I shall not have time, now—however I would have you put it on and wear it 'till I shall have an opportunity of giving you a further explanation.

L A U R A.

I give your ladyship thanks, and will wait with patience 'till you shall please to communicate the rest.

S C E N E

A COMIC OPERA.

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S C E N E II.

LADY WORTHY, LAURA, PATRICK.

PATRICK.

An please your ladyship, madam, there's a couple of young gentlemen standing at the gate in a post-chaise and four, with eyes as black as a burnt potatoe, and rolling and twinkling like a new moon—and so they asked me if my ladyship was at home—but I said nothing at all to 'em, and came running here to ask your ladyship all about it.

LADY WORTHY.

Why so, blockhead?—could not you have given them a rational answer?

PATRICK.

Arrah! my lady, but I thought they looked like bucks.

LADY WORTHY.

Prithee, booby, what are bucks?

PATRICK.

Married, or single, an please your ladyship?

LADY WORTHY.

Psha!—either—neither,

PATRICK.

Why then, my dear lady, I'll hang them both together, for your ladyship, in the thread of my discourse.—The difference, an please your ladyship, is this—the single buck makes horns, the married wears them—thus bucks produce bucks—yet horns do not produce horns—therefore I will be after telling your ladyship how two horns
come

6 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

come from one horn, and one buck from another.

—First and finally—

LADY WORTHY.

And first and finally, be pleased to go to the gate.

PATRICK.

And what will I do there my lady?

LADY WORTHY.

Ask the gentlemen to walk in.

PATRICK.

Yes, my lady— (*going—returns*) arrah! my dear lady, but if they be come in already, I will have nothing to say at all, at all.

LADY WORTHY.

I'll wait on them immediately.

PATRICK.

Ay but, my lady, if they will ask me again ^[*going — returns*] whether you are at home, what will I say, then?

LADY WORTHY.

Ask me no more stupid questions, but be gone.

PATRICK.

Deel burn me, my lady, but that will be cutting matters very short with them, I can assure'em.

LADY WORTHY.

That fellow's stupidity is equalled by nothing but his impertinence—yet I believe he's honest.—I'll go and see what miracle he has found out, and do you stay here 'till I return—I'll not be long.

LAURA.

A COMIC OPERA 7

L A U R A.

I will, madam.

S C E N E III.

L A U R A.

What can this bracelet mean?—the picture a relation's!—now I don't recollect her ladyship's ever mentioning any other relation of mine than my mother—'tis very strange she should have kept so interesting a secret from me till now—but she doubtless had her reasons for it, and their cogency is not to be disputed—I long to hear further about it, yet fear to be shocked with some disagreeable circumstances relative to them—I am unhappy, if 'twere possible to be so under so hospitable a roof—but, am not I a poor, defenceless orphan?—no—her ladyship's unbounded generosity tells me, I am not—may heaven reward her with its choicest blessings!—but for her goodness, what had I been?—helpless, and abandoned to a wretched state of misery and want—but then, I had been ignorant—inured, perhaps, to poverty and toil, I had slept securely on a bed of straw, and health had been the ultimate end of all my wishes; but, now—O heaven avert the stroke!—should my generous protectress be snatched from me, where should I fly for refuge?—no father to support me—no mother to comfort me—no brother to defend me from insults—no sister to share my griefs—no friend to communicate my distresses to—alas! the unfortunate refinements of an ill-placed education would render such a shock insupportable to me, and, consequently, precipitate me into inevitable destruction.—These, sure,

8 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

sure, are ill-timed reflections, considering what her ladyship has just now taught me to hope—but I cannot suppress them—nature will operate.

ACT II.

*How wretched my condition,
When one sad stroke of fate
Must plunge me in perdition,
With ev'ry ill replete!
Upon the verge of ruin,
What horrors do I see,
With open jaws pursuing
Their rapid course to me.*

SCENE IV.

LAURA, PATRICK.

PATRICK.

Miss Laura, Miss Laura, her ladyship says I will carry you into the parlor, to see the outlandish gentlemen in the chaise.

LAURA.

Do you know who they are, Patrick?

PATRICK.

No, my dear crature, I don't know them at all, at all—but I believe one of them will be my lady's son, by and bye—for he kissed her, and hugged her, and made her cry sorely—and deel burn me but the other, now I think on't, must be your son, for he is woundedly like you—however I will see if he'll be after kissing you, and making you cry, too.

LAURA.

You have strange ideas, Patrick.

PATRICK.

A COMIC OPERA. 69

PATRICK.

Ay, my dear jewel, but if they would be true I would be wishing to be your son and all.—By my shoul, but she is the sweetest, gentlest, prattiest crature I ever set eyes on since I left my own dear country.

SCENE V.

PATRICK, DIANA.

DIANA.

Do you think so, indeed, Mr. Patrick?—O the wickedness of this deceitful world!—ongrateful man!—are you not satisfied with the love of your faithful Diana?—I that have refused so many vantagos proffers for your sake, and have gratified you with every thing that is sistent with the prudence of a vartus woman, am I to be treated with neglect, because fortooth you have taken a fancy to Miss Laura?

PATRICK.

Why what art thou talking of, my chaste Diana?

DIANA.

I that have lived with her ladyship nineteen years come next Lammas, and have massacred a fortin of seventeen pound and upwards, besides a very handsome wadrob of the best of parils, am I to be slighted for a little minx that has not got a fardin of her own, and can't mend a hole in her stocking? I that——

C

PATRICK,

10 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

PATRICK.

By Jafus, my dear jewel, the devil has possessed you.

DIANA.

You impurent feller! how dare you to talk so before a modest woman?—but, I suppose, you don't care at all about me, now you've got what you can of me—I dare say, you would have sarved me just the same if I had latten you had your will of me, you nasty feller!

PATRICK.

Arrah, my dear honey, since you come to that, pray what had you done with your modesty when you were catched in the hayloft with your old friend, Will, the coachman?—take that with you—and as for your trumpery that you gave me, we'll be after crying quits—I won't keep them at all, at all.

A I R III.

*Since these are your tantrums, my passionate honey,
Here, take back your rubbish, and pray keep your money,
For Patrick will never have need of your aid:
He ne'er will run craz'd to be plagued with a vizen,
So never intend him for playing your tricks on,
He scorns to be dup'd by a musty old maid.*

*There, stoop for your pen-knife, your choice 'bacco-
stopper,
Your comb, and your cork-screw, my sweet cham-
ber-mopper,*

By

A COMIC OPERA. 11

*By Jafus, I'm glad to be rid of them quite;
No more I'll be mouth'd at for toying with others,
As babies in backstrings are chid by their mothers,
So fare thee well, Di, I'll be out of thy sight.*

S C E N E VI.

D I A N A.

Cruel, barbos, and profidos monster!—Oh
my poor heart!—it will break, that's for sartain
—false wretch!—to leave a faithful maiden in so
vile a manner—and to charge me with scandal
and magdalen—I never can overcome it—I must
die, that I must—my wounded heart is torn into
a thousand pieces—oh!—*(falls into*
a garden chair)—oh! the brute—it's
all over with me—he has murder'd me—cut me
off in the prime of my life—barbrosly butcher-
ed me—O that I had never seen the pajjur'd
man—oh! oh! oh!—*(crying)*—*(rises)*
graceful heaven, I thank thee—my poor heart's
a little more at ease—I may yet recover—but
I shall never be myself again, no never—I have
been too hasty, to be iure—but Patrick will
never forgive me—no, no,—his heart's as
hard as lingum vitus.

A I R IV.

*What dreadful anguish slighted love
Creates within the lover's mind!
What torments my poor bosom move,
Since Patrick proves to me unkind!*

C a

Qf

Of him bereft,
 What hope is left
 For poor Diana, maid forlorn?
 Curs'd jealousy
 Has ruin'd me;
 I wish I never had been born.

S C E N E VII.

Lord LEER'S dressing room, his lordship, alone, sitting at a glass, adjusting his bag-wig.

I protest this fellow is the most provoking rascal that ever any body had to do with—why here is, at least, half an inch difference between one side of my face and the other—There, that's it, to a hair's breadth—I verily believe I never looked better in all my life—tout-a-fait l'air de jeunesse, I protest—and why should not I?—I am not old—no—what is sixty-two?—the very prime of a man's life—the vigor and vivacity of youth, blended with the sagacity and prudence of maturity—I never was more alert since I was fifteen—I protest, were it not for—oh! this consummate rheumatic disorder! I believe I could dance a minuet—O that the little, dear, angelic Laura were but here! what a minuet could I dance with her—ha! ha! ha!—oh! this cursed pain—it always seizes me in my happiest moments—but I'll not be teased with it—I am superior to it—Oh! my sweet girl—receive with open arms the youth who adores you—'tis there, only, he seeks repose—I come, my fair, I fly upon the fleetest wings

wings of love—oh what extacy—yes, I must, I will rifle those sweets, and drown every sense of pain in possession of thy charms—I come this moment—Simon!—Simon! (*calling*)—I'm lost in rapturous ideas—"limbs do your office, bear me to her"—ye gods of love, strengthen my undertaking!

S C E N E VIII.

LORD LEER, SIMON *entering unperceived by his lordship.*

LORD LEER.

A I R V.

*Little Cupid, bear my pray'r,
Guide me to my Laura fair;
In her arms caress'd,
Of her charms possess'd,
Oh what raptures I shall share!*

*In my breast what soft desires,
Rip'ning into nuptial fires!*

*Love shall operate,
Hymen propagate,
Ev'ry blessing love inspires.*

SIMON.

What a d—n'd, doting, decrepid old prig!—propagate, too!—so we shall have ripe cherries at Christmas, and long ificles at Midsummer—Did your lordship call?

LORD LEER.

Oh, ay, Simon, yes—order my carriage out immediately—and, do your hear, Simon, tell

14 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

tell the coachman I am going to lady Worthy's; and would be driven pretty fast.

SIMON.

To lady Worthy's, in such haste, my lord?

LORD LEER.

Why yes, blockhead, to lady Worthy's—and I would have you attend me there—for perhaps I may stay—in short I can't tell how long I shall stay—perhaps all night—perhaps longer.

SIMON.

Pray, my lord, if a body may be so bold—but I think I know, my lord—eh! eh! eh!—I know—

LORD LEER.

What? impertinence, what do you know, now?—who has told you any thing?

SIMON.

Nobody, my lord, nobody—but I have eyes, my lord, I can see—eh! eh! eh!—I beg your lordship's pardon, but I cannot contain my joy—why your lordship looks—

LORD LEER.

How, Simon, how?—come, tell me how I look—one cannot see oneself, you know, Simon, with the eyes of another—

SIMON.

No, no; you old fop, your sweet figure proves that to demonstration—

LORD LEER,

A COMIC OPERA. 13

LORD LEER.

But, don't you think I look killingly to day, Simon, eh?

SIMON.

I know what I should think if I were lady Worthy.

LORD LEER.

What? Simon.

SIMON.

That you are a d---n'd ridiculous, antiquated, feeble, old coxcomb.

LORD LEER.

Eh! Simon, why don't you speak?—what are you thinking of now?

SIMON.

Why I was thinking, my lord, what a charming couple you'll make, and what fine children you'll have—pretty little rogues!—her ladyship is very handsome yet.

LORD LEER.

Her ladyship?—what a stupid fellow!—I wonder how you could think of any thing so ridiculous—her ladyship, indeed—ha! ha! ha!—why it's Miss Laura, Simon, that I have taken a fancy to—you know Miss Laura, Simon, don't you?

SIMON.

Miss Laura!

LORD LEER.

Miss Laura! yes, Miss Laura—I protest the fellow looks as if he were petrified—what, Simon, does

16 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

does it surprize you that I should have an inclination for that lady?

SIMON.

Not at all, my lord.—It would be much more surprize to me if she should have an inclination for such an inanimate being, such a useless piece of antiquity as yourself.

LORD LEER.

Don't you think it will be a very pretty match for her, Simon? I protest I love her to distraction—we shall live vastly happy, I'm sure—nothing can interrupt our happiness.

SIMON.

Now this old wretch certainly thinks himself immortal, if one may judge from his expressions.

LORD LEER.

What d' ye say, Simon?

SIMON.

No doubt, my lord, but your happiness will be compleat with such a handsome young lady.

LORD LEER.

Ay, is not she a sweet creature, Simon?

SIMON.

Yes, my lord—and we'll have a jovial wedding, too—

AIR

A COMIC OPERA.

17

How we'll dance and caper all that day,

Frisk,

Brisk

Pass the time away.

Ring,

Singing,

Joy shall bring in.

Laughing,

Quaffing,

All so gay!

L O R D L E E R.

Ha! ha! ha!—very well, Simon, upon my

word—vastly well, I protest—here Simon,

here's something for you—I always like to re-

ward merit—you're a droll dog—come,

lend me your arm into the next room, and order

the horses to, in a moment—oh! this pain—

it seizes me so unseasonably, or I should not value

it a straw.

S C E N E IV.

SIMON returns. Lord LEER, calling from within.

Bring my sword, too, Simon, I had liked to

have forgot that—and, d'ye hear, Simon,

be sure to put up the flannels in my cloak-bag.

S I M O N.

Ay, ay, I know what you want, better than

you do yourself.—Faith, I've touched the right

string this morning—it sounds well—one

D pound

18 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

pound one——that's unison.—What the devil
have we here? (*taking up some books*) *Ovid's Art
of Love——Man of Pleasure's Companion——*
ha! ha! ha!——consummate als!——now,
for my part, were I a girl, before I'd be teased
with such an impotent old dotard, I'd live an old
maid, curdle my disposition with envy, feast upon
scandal, go to hell headlongs, and lead apes for
Mr. Pluto as long he pleaded.

A. I. R. VII.

*How foolish the girl is that weds an old fellow,
With luxury bloated, half dead with disease;
She'd better be buried alive, I can tell her,
Than ever be plagued with the fumbler.
When she her glowing bosom tenders
To the old fondling, feeble drone,
Not heaven can move him,
The devil can't love him;
His empty caresses,
Inspid excesses!
But say the fond flame when the fuel is gone;
Then strait in Fate's book old
He's written a cuckold,
And none to its dislates bows humbler.*

SCENE
You do yourself—Fate, I've touched the right
thing this morning—it sounds well—one
pound

A COMIC OPERA. 19

S C E N E X.

A room in Lady Worthy's house.

SIR JOHN WORTHY, Sir CHARLES AIRY.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

But what do you think seriously? is not she a fine girl?

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Indeed she is—but is she come-at-able?

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Psha! that's ungenerous—very ill-timed, upon my word, Charles—I have known her from her infancy—we were brought up together, hand in hand, as it were—and I have always entertained a kind of brotherly affection for her.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

And now, I suppose, under that mask of brotherly affection, you would moralize me out of my chance, and keep her all to yourself—no, no, Jack, that won't do—that's too stale an artifice—it won't take with me.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

To convince you, then, that I have no such pretensions as you would insinuate, and, at the same time, to be ingenuous with you, I declare, upon my honor, that I have ever esteemed her too much to injure her, were that possible, which, however, I am far from thinking; and could, at this time, give up every thing I possess in the world to the impulses of a passion I have just now conceived for her—but it is too late—I dare not, must not think of it—my mother has

D 2

just

20 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

just informed me that Lord Leer has made proposals of marriage to her, and is to dine here to day——so that, perhaps, another day may see the sweet girl sacrifice youth and beauty, to age and impotence.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Why now look ye here, Jack, if what you say is true, and you so idly give up your pretensions, I here swear by hell and Styx——and that oath is not to be trifled with——if one may hope she's made of mortal mould, and there's a possibility of corrupting flesh and blood, I will, ere I sleep twice, make a cuckold in embryo of that same old rascal——zounds! Jack, what a delicious coup de galanterie!

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Prithee, Charles, desist from such a rash attempt——consider where you are——I would not for the world——

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

I tell you, Jack, I'll never mind your sophistry any more——you know how you served me at Lyons.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

But consider the person, the circumstances——you would not sure proceed to violence.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Violence! no, no, unless violent argumentation, and violent transports.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Yet hold, Sir Charles——the fault is not less that way——it is equally criminal, whether you seduce

seduce a young, unthinking girl, by soft, delusive persuasions, or openly force her to compliance—the difference is only in the means, the consequences are the same—and it will never be in your power to wipe off the indelible stain her reputation receives, nor, by any means, shield her from impendent infamy, and consequent ruin—I do, therefore, repeat my request for you to desist——nay more—I insist upon it.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Very well, Jack, indeed—a most pathetic harangue, with a very heroic, and peremptory conclusion——now, I suppose, in compliance with your notions of honor, and the devil knows what, we must go immediately to cutting one another's throats, if I persist——no, no, split me if you catch me there——I'll sleep in a whole skin——so you may as well say nothing more about the matter—'twill be to no purpose——I'm resolved——I must——forbearance is impossible——

“ I'll rush upon her in a storm of love,

“ Beat down her guard of honor, all before me,

“ Surfeit on joys 'till ev'n desire grows sick.”

what do you think of that, now?

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Think——

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Nay, nay, I won't hear you, indeed I won't——you are absolutely like the dog in the manger——however, if your delicacy renders you incapable of eating, there's no reason in the world but I may have a relish——I'm not so squeamish stomached, I can assure you.

AIR

A I R VIII.

*On Nature's sound laws
I establish my cause,
Let sanctified mortals condemn;
Search earth and sky round,
And th' ocean profound,
Then learn, the rank error's in them.*

*When beauty invites,
Who could shun the delights
Attendant on youthful desires?
When Venus appears,
And Virtue's in tears,
Dull reason sinks down and expires,*

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Hist!—here's my mother.

S C E N E XI.

SIR JOHN WORTHY, SIR CHARLES AIRY, LADY WORTHY, LAURA.

LADY WORTHY.

I thought I heard you singing, gentlemen, I hope we have not interrupted you.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

By no means, madam—it was nothing but Sir John and I, amusing ourselves with a favorite air, whilst we waited the return of you ladies.

LADY WORTHY.

Nothing more agreeable, in my opinion—
but come, how shall we amuse ourselves 'till
dinner

A COMIC OPERA. 23

dinner time?—oh, now I think on it, as I expect a visit from lord Leer to day, who is but a very indifferent walker, suppose we take a walk in the garden before his lordship comes—I have made great alterations, my dear, since you went away.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

So, I think, you wrote me, madam—I should like much to take a view of your improvements.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

And I agree to it heartily—you could not have proposed any thing more agreeable to me.

LADY WORTHY.

Well then, we'll go immediately—and should his lordship come in the mean time, he will very readily dispense with ceremony—we never stand much upon empty forms amongst ourselves.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

So much the better, madam—the less ceremony the more sincerity, is always my maxim.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Come, ladies, shall we be going—I am impatient to see the old spot where I and Miss Laura used to ramble, when we were children, free from care or thought—happy moments!—do you remember them, madam?

L A U R A.

Perfectly well, Sir John—they were days of innocence and happiness, with which the
most

24 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

most perfect state of maturity cannot stand in competition.

LADY WORTHY.

Pray, then, ramble them over once more together——do you take the south walk, and, if Sir Charles Airy will give me his company, we'll take the north; and, going by the wilderness, make our rendezvous at the summer house on the mount.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Your ladyship does me honor—allons, ladies—come, Sir John——

S C E N E XII.

The Garden.

SIR JOHN WORTHY, LAURA.

LAURA.

You don't seem in good spirits, Sir John——sure change of climate has not wrought a change of disposition in you——if it has, I am in hopes, breathing a while your native air will restore your good humour.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

I much doubt it——but, will you permit me to tell you the real cause, without being angry?

LAURA.

Why not, Sir John?—in our more juvenile hours, our joys, our griefs, our hopes and fears were mutually known and participated—I hope I have done nothing to forfeit your confidence.

A COMIC OPERA. 25

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Know, then, amiable girl, it is your lovely self has brought about this strange, this sudden metamorphosis.

L A U R A.

Sir John!

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Yes, my dear Laura, your incomparable charms, hid from my sight these three long years, and now beaming full on me with redoubled lustre, dazzle, like the long-hid sun, breaking from the bosom of a cloud, and impress my soul with inexpressible emotions.

L A U R A.

What can this mean!

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Yet hear me, cruel girl, and do not look so disdainfully on me—I am but too well apprized of your engagement with Lord Leer, and would not, on any occasion, be guilty of that which might interrupt your future tranquillity—but I am hurried beyond my reason—I am sensible I should not act thus—yet, pardon me, my dear girl, if I cannot resist the influence of a passion, which nothing but your superior beauty could give birth to, nothing but death annihilate—In short, I love you—and from this day I date the total subversion of my peace of mind, unless—unless what?—I must be miserable—

E

L A U R A.

L A U R A.

Pray, Sir John, don't be so distressed—I cannot bear to see you thus—it makes me extremely unhappy.

S I R J O H N W O R T H Y.

Oh! tell me not so—that adds a double poignancy to the anguish that tortures my soul—but, perhaps, it is because I am disagreeable to you—see, the dazzling prospect of a title eradicates the tender affection you once entertained for me.

L A U R A.

Indeed, Sir John, you do me wrong—I love you as well as ever—and, be assured, the affection I have, and ever had for you, as my brother, will subsist to my latest moments, with unabated ardor.

S I R J O H N W O R T H Y.

Brother! how cold that word—how different from the flame that racks my bosom—but what more can I ask?—are you not already promised to another?—yet, 'tis too late to retreat, and further advances are forbidden me—your pity and forgiveness are all I dare request.

A I R I X.

*Fairest girl, let soft compassion
Plead a hapless lover's part;
Shed the balmy consolation
On the pangs that rend his heart.
If, those heav'nly beauties tracing,
I on sure destruction run,
Let me, that sweet death embracing,
Gaze, admire, and be undone.*

L A U R A.

L A U R A.

This is too much—rise, dear Sir John,—I am ashamed of this humiliation—alas!—I find myself too interested in your distress—I fear—oh! I fear I love you too much—I feel a struggle within me, which till now I have been a stranger to—what will become of us?—we must both be wretched—how shall I appear before my lord, so prepossessed in your favor?—what can I say to my dear lady Worthy?—my looks, my actions will betray me—O let me go—let us instantly separate—the power of sympathy, tho’ a solace to our little hearts before, will now involve us in inextricable miseries.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Generous girl—

L A U R A.

Nay, not a word more, as you value my future repose—leave me this moment, I conjure you—however severe the conflict, gratitude shall ever be the predominant passion of my soul—oh! fly this instant—I see his lordship coming down yon walk—run, tell her ladyship he is come—and, as I must see him alone, I’ll wait his coming, here, as if by accident—the sooner the better—the delay of persecution gives scope to reflection, and doubly tortures, because we suffer in idea also.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

First, let me seal, on that fair hand, a testimony of my unfortunate passion, and I obey.

E 2

S C E N E

S C E N E XIII.

LAURA, *seated in a bower at the bottom of the stage, in a pensive posture.*

Lord LEER *enters, leaning on SIMON's arm.*

LORD LEER.

Ay, Simon, I think it was somewhere here—
which way can the little, dear creature be gone
—Oh! yonder she is, Simon—yonder's the
sweet charmer of my heart—there, you may
leave me, Simon—I can walk very well now,
without your assistance—I verily believe I can
run—I'm all on fire.

SIMON.

No, no, it's nothing but smoak—it will
soon evaporate—and then, should that dross
subside to its kindred earth, alas! thy charmer
may look 'till her eyes fly out before she can re-
animate the fallen lump of clay—

LORD LEER.

Sweet soul! how engaging that attitude—
I dare say, she's thinking what a charming ren-
counter we shall have, by and bye—ha! ha!
ha!—what a delicious reverie—I must bring
her out of it by degrees—I know how very
well—My adorable Laura!—I protest she
does not hear me—dear creature, how she en-
joys the thought—'faith, if I had not sent Si-
mon back, he should have fetched my German-
flute—how I would have serenaded her—
dad, I'll give la petite mignonne a touch in the
vocal

vocal way——she's a dear lover of music, I know
——may Apollo inspire my lays!

A I R X.

*Rise, my life, my love, my Laura,
Haste to bless your faithful Leer;
In these arms nor care nor sorrow
Shall invade thy bliss, my dear.
Rev'ling loves and smiling graces,
Wanton kisses, warm caresses,
E'er shall reign triumphant here.
Of such a lovely girl possessest,
What new joys will fire my breast!
At noon, at night 'till rosy morning,
Sweetly enjoying
Kissing and toying,
Beauteous smiles my love adorning.
Hail love! hence care!
Thus I'll live with Laura fair.*

Ha! ha! ha!——I protest, I thought you would
never have blessed me with a glance from those
bewitching eyes, my little angel.

L A U R A.

I beg your lordship's pardon for not observing
you sooner——I was thinking——

L O R D L E E R.

Well, well, my dear life, I'll spare thee the
blushing narration——I can guess very well——
I have shrewd notions of things——ha! ha! ha!
——Lady Worthy has broken the ice, I per-
ceive——well, then, we'll make short work on
it——delays are dangerous——why should we
hesitate

30 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

hesitate a moment to be happy——what say you, my sweet, when shall I have the pleasure of calling you Lady Leer?

L A U R A.

I am very sensible, my lord, of the unmerited honor of your lordship's proposition, but that question I am not at liberty to answer——I am entirely at Lady Worthy's disposal; therefore to her I must beg leave to refer your lordship.

L O R D L E E R.

Ha! ha! ha!——that's very pretty, very innocent, I protest——so I must court Lady Worthy in order to gain the affection of my little pretty Laura——that's very laudable tho'——very grateful indeed——oh, here comes her ladyship, very opportunely, I protest.

S C E N E XIV.

L O R D L E E R, L A D Y W O R T H Y, L A U R A.

L O R D L E E R.

Your most obedient servant, Lady Worthy.

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

I hope your lordship's well.

L O R D L E E R.

Never better, I assure you——the power of attraction is amazingly great——the needle will veer to the pole, madam——ha! ha! ha!——I have been so happy with Miss Laura, that, I protest, I had forgot to enquire after your ladyship,——but you'll excuse it, I know——the cause, madam, the cause——ha! ha! ha!

L A D Y

A COMIC OPERA 31

LADY WORTHY.

I am glad to see your lordship in such spirits — we shall pass the day in a manner unlooked-for agreeable — for my son, with Sir Charles Airy, a fellow collegean, are arrived from abroad this morning, and, I dare say, will be extremely happy to meet with your lordship.

LORD LEER.

Indeed! — I protest we'll be very merry, then. — But, before we go any further, tell me, my dear Lady Worthy, when the happy moment shall be, for days I must not reckon by, which shall see my amiable Laura and me united — she has left that part entirely to your ladyship — other matters are agreed on — are not they, my adorable girl, eh? — let those sweet lips themselves confirm it. —

L A U R A.

I hope your lordship will excuse me — I did not presume to resolve on any thing, without her ladyship's acquiescence.

LORD LEER.

Well, well, no matter, my angel — I understand the language of the eyes — ha! ha! ha! come, Lady Worthy, what do you say? — when shall it be?

LADY WORTHY.

Why, my lord, we should have some little time to consider of it — there are necessary preparations, you know —

LORD

32 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

LORD LEER.

Hang preparations——what more preparation need we——I'm ready, my sweet girl's ready, every thing's ready——is not it?

SCENE XV.

LORD LEER, LADY WORTHY, LAURA,
PATRICK.

PATRICK.

Yes, an please your lords and ladyships, every thing's ready——quite ready——and deil burn me but there's the cook sweating and swearing if you don't go to dinner this instant every thing will be after being spoil'd, too, and you shan't eat it, at all, at all——

LADY WORTHY.

Well then, my lord, we'll have a further conference after we have dined.

SCENE XVI.

PATRICK.

Arrah, by my shoul and St. Patrick, my own dear relation, but that old lordship looks, and ogles as if he would be after making court upon my pratty Miss Laura——by Jasus, if things do take such strange turnings and twinings, she'll be the greatest little fool that ever lay upon a bed, if she don't make cuckold upon him——why now, suppose I and Diana were to come together, and perhaps we may, for all this, I would be after kissing Bet, the dairy-maid, and so

MAHOMETTA. A COMIC OPERA. 33

to make cuckold upon her——and no harm nei-
ther——not at all, at all.

A I R XI.

*The spark that takes up with a peevish old virgin
At least may one mighty good reason alledge;
Whatever young mad-caps will be after urging,
What fool, in a storm, would reject an old hedge?
And should my Diana*

Smiles on me again, ah!

I'll stop up the breach with the conjugal wedge,

I'll copy the folks in high life,

And ramble where pleasure abounds,

Keep lasses, divorce my old wife,

But stick to her seventeen pounds.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

F A C T

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

A room in Lady Worthy's house.

LADY WORTHY.

THE face of affairs, in my house, seems to have undergone a strange vicissitude to day—I cannot be deceived——no, no——it is too obvious——Laura involuntarily sighs, blushes, turns pale——I plainly see the struggles in her heart, to conceal what she evidently the more exposes——my lord vainly attributes all to himself, and hugs himself in, what I must call, the absurd idea——my son has lost his gaiety, and seems absorbed in thought, without knowing it——that settled gloom on his countenance forebodes ill——his stolen glances, eagerly, tho' insensibly rivetted on her, confirm my suspicions——I tremble for the consequences——I would not willingly sacrifice the happiness of my girl, to the most splendid allurements of fortune; but she has herself left every thing to me, and my lord, accordingly, builds his hopes on my acquiescence——what can I do?——to deny him, under these circumstances, would be a gross affront——I cannot do it——I love Laura, I love my son; yet honor is my reigning principle; and that principle I never have, nor ever will knowingly violate.

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

LADY WORTHY, PATRICK.

PATRICK.

An please your ladyship there's a strange parson below would be glad to be after spaking with your ladyship, if you'll please to be at home.

LADY WORTHY.

What person is it, Patrick? a gentleman or a lady?

PATRICK.

Why, as to that, I don't know, at all, at all.

LADY WORTHY.

Well, blockhead, but is it a man or a woman?

PATRICK.

Arrah, my lady, but I don't know that, neither—but if your ladyship pleases, I will be after examining, and so come and acquaint your ladyship with the particulars.

LADY WORTHY.

Psha!—what drefs is the person in?

PATRICK.

By Jafus, my lady, but that is the thing that puzzles me—I believe, an please your ladyship, it is something of the mermaid kind—a half-and-half oddity—it is a man without breeches, or a woman without a cap—but, if your ladyship will please to stop a moment, I will

F 2

go

go and look again, and be after telling your ladyship how much of both there will be under them all.

LADY WORTHY.

Go, booby—you live till you don't know your right hand from your left—shew the lady up.

PATRICK.

Arrah, my lady, but I am heartily glad your ladyship told me—I would have been after calling her *sir*—deed burn me tho', how could she tell that, on sight, on seen.

S C E N E III.

LADY WORTHY, BELINDA, *in a riding habit.*

BELINDA.

I beg pardon, madam, for the liberty I have taken, in thus abruptly introducing myself who am an entire stranger to you—but, I dare say, you will readily excuse it, when you know the importance of my business, and the urgency of its being put into immediate execution.

LADY WORTHY.

There needs no apology, madam, I assure you—if you'll please to sit down, I shall hear whatever you may have to communicate with greater pleasure.

BELINDA.

I fear, madam, my narrative will have an effect very far from pleasing, since it must inevitably frustrate your generous intentions; in the
success

success of which I only fear you may have interested yourself too much, to be easily reconciled to a disappointment: yet, in the end, you cannot fail to rejoice at a discovery, disagreeable in itself, but happy in its consequences.

LADY WORTHY.

Pray, madam, be explicit—I am impatient to have a circumstantial account of an affair apparently teeming with such importance.

BELINDA.

Know, then, madam, I am the daughter of a substantial farmer in the North, where Lord Leer has several estates. About five years ago, his lordship, coming into that part of the country, accidentally saw me, became enamoured, solicited my father's approbation, obtained it, and without much consulting my inclinations, led me an unwilling victim to the altar, and we were married.

LADY WORTHY.

Married!—but I beg your pardon—pray go on.

BELINDA.

My lord then took me up to London, where the novelty of the scene, joined to his lordship's tenderness, attached me insensibly to him. But, ere a twelvemonth had elapsed, by having the small pox, I lost what few charms I had been flattered to think I possessed, and, soon after, his lordship's affection and person; not only that, but I have been shut up, by his order, till about a month ago, when I found means to escape,

escape, in spite of the vigilance of my abandoned keeper. I have since obtained a certificate of our marriage, which your ladyship will find authentic, and came down in the stage last night, in hopes of having my wrongs redressed: but when I came this morning to the village where his lordship's seat is, finding the purpose of his visit hither whispered about, I hastened to prevent, if possible, the execution of so vile an action, and hope I have not been disappointed in my intention.

LADY WORTHY.

Monstrous!—I am all astonishment—what complicated wickedness!—However, madam, I have the pleasure to inform you, you are not too late—what shall we do?—how shall we make him thoroughly ashamed of his baseness?

BELINDA.

I must beg to be directed in that by your ladyship—whatever you will, I am agreeable to.

LADY WORTHY.

To what a pitch of deceit do people arrive!—I am shocked, yet am I pleased; because I hope, now, to procure happiness to those who most desire and deserve it.—Let me see—oh, you must know, madam, his lordship has been so warm, and so confident of success, that he has brought a special licence with him, and is anxious to have the ceremony performed this very afternoon—now, suppose we keep up the farce, and introduce you in a gown and cassock, as the
curate

curate of our village——do you think his lordship would know you?

BELINDA.

I believe not, madam——I like the proposal much, tho' I am ill-disposed for dissimulation; but since it will contribute to his greater mortification, and may have a good effect, I shall very readily submit to the metamorphosis.—I'll answer for the operation of the deception——the most practised in deceit are still at a loss to guard against every species of it——it couches under every shape, and often the most unsuspected.

A I R XII.

*In ev'ry shape, in ev'ry form,
The human heart can find,
Deceit lurks on, 'till in a storm
It bursts upon the mind.*

*Thus men, and thus fell crocodiles
Th' unwary oft decoy;
Tho' both delude by diff'rent wiles,
Both fawn and both destroy.*

LADY WORTHY.

Well, madam, if you'll walk along with me I'll put you into orders presently; and, whilst you are getting ready, I'll go and prepare the rest of the company to assist at this curious ceremony.

SCENE

THE FAIR MORPHAN,

SCENE IV.

The Garden.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Egad, I'm the luckiest fellow that ever was born—I had not been in this house an hour, before I was concerting measures for an intrigue with this sweet girl, Laura—I have scarce been on the premises four, and she runs plump into my arms—what can equal it?—this is too fair an opportunity to be let slip—'faith I'll make the best use of my time—now or never—here she comes—she has rather a forbidding aspect tho'—but appearances are not always true—besides, a vigorous attack requires a vigorous defence—I'll just make a feint of retiring, and then pour in a broadside upon her, when she's least prepared for its reception.

SCENE V.

Sir CHARLES AIRY, LAURA.

LAURA.

I scarce know what I do, or where I am—my thoughts are confused—my spirits depressed—my mind uncommonly burthened with a variety of contending passions—I wish—I know not what to wish—I dare not think—reflection is poison to my tranquillity—whither have my foolish steps betrayed me? (*seeing Sir Charles*)

SIR

A COMIC OPERA. 41

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Forgive me, madam, if, urged by the force of your uncommon beauty, I am guilty of a breach of politeness, in thus abruptly breaking in upon your solitude—but——

L A U R A.

A violation of forms, sir, I can be easily reconciled to——a breach of truth, tho' wrapped up in a compliment, displeases me——you will, therefore, pardon me, sir, if I am so rude as to request the favor of your absence.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

By heavens, madam, you command impossibilities——I am so rivetted to you, that all the powers of earth can never separate me from you——command the miser to forsake his hoarded pelf——divert the loadstone from its beloved north, or bid the statesman quit ambition, as soon your injunctions would be complied with.—To see and not admire, to admire and not love, to love and not declare it, would be the highest indignity to such celestial charms.

A I R XIII.

*The speaking eye, the rose-ting'd cheek,
The lovely lilly-painted neck,
From art no graces borrow;
There Nature all her pow'rs combin'd,
To mortal form the goddess joyn'd,
And call'd the charmer Laura.*

L A U R A.

Why will you persist in a thing which, I have told you, is disagreeable to me?——I am

G

not

not to be trifled with, I assure you; and the unmeaning compliments you are pleased to bestow on me, tho' I consider them as the growth of the climate you have lately left, are nevertheless, in my opinion, a gross insult on the understanding, and too indelicate to merit a reply.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Be not so unjust, madam, to your own perfections and my sincerity; call not the spontaneous effusions of a heart, a stranger to deceit, mere compliments—believe me, dearest girl, you undervalue your intrinsic worth too much—but 'tis ever so with transcendent merit—a sensibility too delicate will not permit you to listen to the praises which every tongue must be lavish in, soon as the eyes have caught the charming object.

L A U R A.

Indeed, sir, you deal out rhetoric to very little purpose.—The man who can suppose any attention will be paid to the encomiums he shall think proper to flatter a person with, he never saw before, must have a very mean opinion of her understanding.—I am sorry, sir, to find myself under a necessity of behaving inconsistent with that deference I owe you, as the friend of my lady and Sir John Worthy; but, I am very certain, neither of them would give a sanction to the cause of my rudeness; therefore, I must again beg you will pursue your walk, and leave me to myself.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

By all that's sacred, I cannot part from you yet—I find your mental beauties so coincident
with

with your personal charms, that I could for ever listen, in extacy, to the mellifluous accents that enchanting mouth gives utterance to.—Let me entreat you, bewitching girl, to bless me with your presence, yet a moment longer—let us walk into the agreeable shade of yon delicious bower—nay, I must not be denied——

A I R XIV.

*Come, give me your hand,
I cannot withstand
The force of such beauty, such love;
Let Cupid unite
The pow'rs of delight,
To bless us in yonder alcove.*

L A U R A.

*Pray, sir, be not rude,
Enough you intrude,
In treating so slight my command.
I ne'er was thus us'd;
I'll not be abus'd,
Desist, sir, and let go my hand.*

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Heavens!—what do I see?—O pardon me madam, if too justly you are offended, and tell me, I conjure you, by what means you came possessed of that bracelet—it concerns me nearly, and may tend to a discovery which I have long sought to make in vain.

L A U R A.

The treatment, sir, I have met with from you, cannot entitle you to such an indulgence to your curiosity.

G 2

SIR.

THE FAIR ORPHAN,

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

I confess, madam, I am highly culpable, and will do any thing in my power to atone for my fault—do but oblige me in this particular, and I will endeavor to oblige you henceforward so long as I live.

L A U R A.

If you are really penitent, I shall not be inexorable—do you know the picture in it, sir, that you are so very curious?

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

I do.

L A U R A.

Then you must have known a relation of mine.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

How, madam?—a relation of yours?

L A U R A.

Yes, sir, so Lady Worthy informs me—but I see she is coming this way — if you enquire of her, you may have a more satisfactory account than I can give you.

S C E N E VI.

LADY WORTHY, SIR CHARLES AIRY, LAURA,

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Excuse my impatience, Lady Worthy; but you will do me a singular favor if you will oblige me with a further account of the bracelet this lady wears—she tells me, it contains the likeness of a relation of her's, and has referred me to your
ladyship

ladyship for the rest—pray, madam, recite the particulars—I tremble in an excess of hopes and fears.

LADY WORTHY.

Since you seem so very anxious, Sir Charles, I will not disappoint you—it is the picture of Laura's father.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Her father, madam?

LADY WORTHY.

So her mother declared to me, with her departing breath, when she earnestly recommended her to my care, and particularly begged I would preserve it for her.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Pray, madam, what is the lady's surname?

LADY WORTHY.

Harcourt, Sir Charles.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

My God!—my sister!—O let my arms in-fold the long-lost darling of my injured mother!—sure heaven directed me to contract an intimacy with your son, madam, at once to check my follies in their career, and bring me to the only relation I have, for an exemplification of that virtue which 'till now I have thought ideal, but which it shall be my future study to preserve inviolate.

LADY WORTHY.

How am I delighted!—what a pleasing discovery—I feel so much joy, on the occasion, that I almost doubt its reality.

LAURA,

L A U R A.

Oh, madam! what delight swims in my bosom, to think I have found one so nearly allied to me—my brother!—how dear that unaccustomed word is to my heart!—it is too much——

L A D Y W O R T H Y.

Pray, Sir Charles, let us a little more into the light of this extraordinary affair—I am not dubious—I read veracity in that changed countenance—but I am eager to know what the good lady, your mother, was so careful to conceal, if proper to be divulged at this distance of time, because it relates to my favourite girl, Laura,

S I R C H A R L E S A I R Y.

I shall oblige you, madam, with the greatest pleasure.—My parents lived happily together, till my unfortunate mother took a girl to wait on her, with whom my infatuated father became so enamoured, that a total desertion of my mother was the consequence. Nay his former affection degenerated into brutality; he sold his estates by private contract, left my sister and mother, with only the household moveables for their subsistence, and went over to the continent, where he lived, with the sharer of his affection and vices, 'till about four years since, when he was taken ill, and sent for me from Oxford, where he had placed me for my education. I arrived just time enough to receive from him the sad relation of his vices, and which he prayed me to atone for, as much as possible, by equally sharing the fortune he left, between myself, my mother, and sister, if living and to be found.—My mother, I find,

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find, is no more, my dear sister will, therefore, share with me a fortune, which I can assure her, is not inconsiderable—Now, madam, I hope you'll oblige me with a sequel.

LADY WORTHY.

Indeed, Sir Charles, I shall not have time now—I came hither with an intent to inform you of a discovery which has been made to me; and which, I am apt to think, will prove almost as agreeable to Laura as this we have just learned; and if you'll walk in with me I'll give you the particulars as we go on.

SCENE VII.

A room in Lady Worthy's house.

BELINDA, *in a gown and cassock.*

Now I am prepared to act the hypocrite, and under the sanction of a religious disguise—will that be well?—yet surely it cannot be otherwise—I have no sinister motives—my views are to redress injury, and reclaim the abandoned—'twere to be wished that all who wear this sacred garb acted on principles as just and salutary; that religion might cease to be the jest of the libertine and illiterate; that example might be attendant on precept; and that the indecent maxim of *do what I say, not what I do*, might no longer be a reproach to the dignitaries of the church.—But I must keep up the spirit of my new-assumed character, 'till things are ripe for execution.—O, I believe I shall not long want an opportunity of trying my canonical

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canonical powers; for here comes one, seemingly, big with all the important curiosity of our sex—I must indulge it.

S C E N E VIII.

BELINDA, DIANA,

DIANA.

[peeping in at the door.]

Well, as I hope to perfarve my chastity, it is true what Patrick told me——this is, for fartin, the self-same conjuring miller that makes old folks young——they say he sometimes conjures himself into a parson——ay, ay, it must be so——why his face is as like the picture in my aunt Swilltub's parlor as one apple is like another——now I suppose he is come to avail upon my lord to undergo the oration in his mill, that his age may be more dapted to Laura's——so, as our people are out of the way, I may as well ask him a few questions myself——I'm sure he can tell fortunes.——Sir, (*entering*) an please your doctorship, if a body may be so bold, are not you a confessor of tautology?

BELINDA.

What can the woman mean? I don't understand you.

DIANA.

Why that is, an please your doctorship, can't you tell when anybody is to be married——and what the color of their husbands hair is——and howmany they will have——and how long they'll live

live——and how many children they'll have
——and whether a person will be rich——
and all such things as them.

BELINDA.

Good heavens! she takes me for a conjuror,
most certainly——what shall I do?——I must
e'en humour her——pray what is your name?

DIANA.

There, I knew what he was——now I shall
have my fortune told for nothing——Diana,
sir,——my mother's name was Grace——and I
was born on the first day of April, about four
o'clock in the morning.

BELINDA.

I think, Mrs. Diana, that was rather an omi-
nous day.

DIANA.

Nominous, rominous——I suppose that
means rainy——yes, sir, it rained all that day,
my mother said, so that my father could not carry
Mrs. Sycophantania, the midwife, home——
and so she was obliged to stay all night, and lie
under the coverlid of his bed.

BELINDA.

So, so——pray how old may you be, Mrs.
Diana?

DIANA.

Lord, what shall I say now?——two and twen-
ty, sir.

BELINDA.

You are certainly more than that.

H

DIANA.

DIANA.

Dear o'me, how surprizing is that!—well I must tell him the truth, I see—that is, I would say, fir, two and forty.

BELINDA.

You must have lived with your lady many years.

DIANA.

Yes, fir, nineteen years, if please God come next Lammas.—As I am alive he knows every thing about me as well as I do myself—I hope he won't say any thing about William, for fear Patrick should hear of it.

BELINDA.

You carry your years extremely well, Mrs. Diana—you have no doubt, had many suitors in your younger days.

DIANA.

Why, as to that, fir, to be sure, tho' I say it that should not say it, about twenty years ago, no young girl had a better countenance; and, I am sure, nobody had more confessions of love made to them than I had, nor more disposals to tie the Gorgeous Knot, as the young men called it: but I was not composed for matrimony, at that time; I was convexorable to all their treaties, and injected them all.

BELINDA.

I dare say you don't continue in that mind at present—some fellow-servant, I presume, may have annulled that sentiment.

DIANA.

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DIANA.

Good gracious! how perdigious!—I'll be hanged if he don't mean Patrick—he'll tell me about William next, that's for sartin, if I don't deny this—No, fir, I am in no haste to be married—it's all in good time.

BELINDA.

Nay, I don't expect a confession—but there is a young man in the house, that it is more than possible you may have made some slight impressions on.

S C E N E IX.

BELINDA, DIANA; PATRICK, *peeping in.*

DIANA.

O, fir, you mean Patrick, I suppose——no fir, indeed fir, I can assure you fir——

PATRICK.

O, ma'am——say you so, ma'am——indeed ma'am——de'el burn me, but I believe he will be after baptizing her by and bye——however, my dear jewels, I will stand here, and see what you say.

BELINDA.

And you think you can keep that resolution, notwithstanding Patrick.

DIANA.

O yes, fir——you may depend on me——what I say I always stand to.

H 2

PATRICK.

P A T R I C K.

Arrah, by my shoul, but I am come just in time——matters are all agreed on, I see.

D I A N A.

But, fir,——if you please, fir——pray, fir, don't say any thing about it to Patrick.

P A T R I C K.

No, no, my honey, I dare say he won't.

B E L I N D A.

That you may be assured of.——But I see your lady coming this way——I must attend her——Mrs. Diana, your servant——I am sorry we must postpone this matter.

S C E N E X.

P A T R I C K., D I A N A.

D I A N A.

Dear creature, how sorry I am that my lady should come at such a time——if he could but have stayed a little longer, what pleasure should I have had——he would have——

P A T R I C K.

Arrah, my jewel, but what would he do?——de'el burn me, Diana, but I am heartily glad I have found out your tricks.

D I A N A.

O, my dear Patrick, I'm glad to see you——pray don't be angry with me,

P A T R I C K.

P A T R I C K.

No, no, by my shoul, but I will be very glad, I tell you——Patrick is safe out of the snare——the trap is sprung, but the fool is not caught——ay, ay, my dear jewel, when the wife sits upon fools eggs she hatches cuckolds——by Jafus, my honey, that won't do for Patrick at all, at all.

D I A N A.

Now lovy, Patrick, how can you be so perditionously pervoking?——did not you say, just now, that you would never be angry with your Diana any more?——what, then, makes you tell stories, to make her uneasy?

P A T R I C K.

And pray now, my sweet crature, did not you tell me just now, that you would be faithful to Patrick?——and did not I hear you, this very moment, wishing that that conjuring parson would be after staying a little longer?——did not you entreat him not to tell Patrick?

D I A N A.

Why, Patrick——dear Patrick——pray——

P A T R I C K.

De'el burn me, Diana, but you said you would have great pleasure, too, if he stayed. Arrah by my shoul, but that was to put great horns upon Patrick's head, and so be after making him a buck

D I A N A.

O what a monstros, wicked thing that is, to say so——I am sure there is not a woman——

P A T R I C K

P A T R I C K.

By Jafus, my honey, so deceitful as your self.

D I A N A.

O what an internal, and bolical suspicion!—well—well—I won't put myself in a passion—I won't disorder myself—but I defy —

P A T R I C K.

Arrah, my jewel, you may defy what you will—but you had better not be in a rage—so look ye here, Diana, if you can make me believe I did not see what you said, and hear you both together, spake now, and I will tell you what I will do.

D I A N A.

Indeed, Patrick, if the ferocity of a maid is to be depended on, I am as innocent of what you charge me with, as the child unborn—it is true, I did say what you say, but you put a wrong instruction on my words, indeed you do, Patrick.

P A T R I C K.

Why, what will I think then?—tell me the truth, Diana, and make it as clear as Carrickfergus bay, or by Jafus I won't spake with you any more at all, at all.

D I A N A.

Well then, my dear Patrick, I will tell you the whole affair.—The gentleman had only been so obliging as to tell me part of my fortune; and indeed he did tell me, in the most wonderful manner, all about you, and in short
all

A COMIC OPERA 55

all that I had done in my life—and so I was very eager to know what would happen to me in maturity—that's the whole truth, upon my honor, lovy—now I hope you will be satisfied.

PATRICK.

De'el burn me, Diana, but that is wonderful, indeed, if you don't humbug me.

DIANA.

It is true, every tittle, as I hope to be beloved, my Patrick.

PATRICK.

Well, well, my honey, that's enough—I forgive you, with all my heart

DIANA.

Nay, but—now Patrick—I know you don't love me—you don't forgive me—do pray, Patrick, be kind to me.

PATRICK.

Arrah, my sweet crature, but you're a cant—you're after longing for a kiss now, I know—there, be a good girl, Di, and love me well, for ever and a day.

DIANA.

That I will, my sweet Patrick—now my facility is compleat.

AIR

A I R XV.

Dian. *Whilst my dear Patrick thus proves kind,
No jealous fears shall rack my mind;
His gentle smiles have passion quell'd,
Which erst the blast of torment swell'd.
Welcome, thrice welcome, heart-felt joy!
Avaunt, harsh care!—fell discord, fly!
Henceforth, secure from all alarms,
I'll live, and die within his arms.*

Pat. *Thus, my dear jewel, always prove
An object worthy of my love,
And Patrick shall his cares employ
To please his fond, his faithful Di.*

Both. *Hence, then, away with hopes and fears!*

Pat. *For Patrick loves,*

Dian. *and Di reveres.*

Both. *This sure must be the test of love;*

Pat. *The husband,*

Dian. *wife,*

Both. *the turtle dove.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

A parlor in Lady Worthy's house: wine, fruit, &c. on the table.

SIMON, PATRICK.

SIMON.

Co-come, Patrick, you queer Irish dog you, why don't you drink about?—all people, my cock, have their *ins* and their *outs*—my lord duke, and my lord de-devil are all the same in the same place—so I am my lord Leer, and you are my lady Worthy, now—they're *out* and we're *in*, Mr. Patrick, that's all—we are their representatives in the parlor, too—so push about—damme, Patrick boy, never fear—we'll make the best of our places, for fear they should not last long—co-come—a se-sen-timent, my heart of oak—fill him up—a noble bumper, or nothing.

PATRICK.

Arrah, by my shoul, Mr. Simon, but I will drink no more than this glass—I will be drunk as drunk—and then I will do nothing at all, at all.

SIMON.

Why what a milk-sop—can't drink a bottle—co-come, damme Patrick, never mind

I

—wind

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—wind up with a g-glorious sentiment—
a luscious one, my buck, that will make the
young girls titter, and hide their fa-faces.

PATRICK.

By Jafus, then, here's *Wilkes and Liberty*, and
my own dear *Dr. Lucas*.

SIMON.

D--n your se-sentiments, if you call them sen-
timents—I'll have no more of them—let's
have a good song, since we can have nothing
else—exempli gratia, as the school-boys
say—here goes.

A I R XVI.

*Away with your wrangling, your jangling, and noise,
Of placemen, of patriots, and liberty boys;
Who freely can tipple is freest of all,
His time slips away with a toll-de-roll-loll.*

*What care I a farthing who's rich, or who's great,
Who rises or falls in the church or the state;
I rise with one bottle, with two nobly fall—
I die, but die game, with a toll-de-roll-loll.*

S C E N E II.

SIMON, PATRICK, DIANA.

DIANA.

So, gentlemen, you're very merry—upon
my word, I am mightily glad on it—pray,
Mr. Simon, make free with what you find—
you're vastly welcome, I assure you—the
com-

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company will not come in this half hour yet, I dare say; so you may be quite easy on that account.

S I M O N.

Ah!—what my dear Mrs. Diana!—I am heartily g-glad to see that pretty, smiling, physiognomy of yours——faith, I must have a kiss, before I go any further, that's pos.

D I A N A.

Don't, Mr. Simon, pray don't, let me alone——O lud!—how can you do so?—you make a body blush like I don't know what, you do——you gentlemen valler de shams are so vastly polite, that one is at a loss to return all the civilities you make use of, to us poor girls that keep always at home, like——tho', for my part, I *have* seen something of the world——I have been to town twice, and to be sure received a great many bellishings from the quaintance I protracted with the upper servants of the best families; besides going to the plays, and seeing the wax-work, and every thing that was worth intention.

S I M O N.

Damme, Patrick boy, if Mrs. Diana is not worth her weight in gold, by all that's handsome and agreeable——I must have another taste of that sweet mouth, with your leave, Mr. Patrick.

P A T R I C K.

Ay, my dear honey, with all my shoul——kiss as long as you like——Mrs. Sally will be after repaying me, when I come to your house.

I 2

D I A N A.

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DIANA.

Fye, Patrick, an't you ashamed of your self, to put Mr. Simon upon one, in such a manner?—but you men are so valentine in your positions that you always courage one another to depose upon good nature—you frustrate a body so, you naughty men you, that I had liked to have forgot what I came for.—Why Miss Laura, sweet little dear, is a going to be married to my lord, this very after noon.—

SIMON.

By George, I have guessed matters vastly well, then—I told my lord I would be jo-joyous, that day above all days.

PATRICK.

Arrah, by my shoul, but this is a very sudden motion—touch and take—deel burn me, my jewels, but it's like gunpowder—no sooner off than touched.

DIANA.

Why, to be sure, my lord is somewhat capitate—but one need not wonder—she's a charming little creature—I hope she'll remember me when she's Lady Leer—I have carried the little thing, many a time, in my arms, to make her bedience to his lordship, when he came to our house—dear o'me, how things come about in a little time.

SIMON.

Very true, Mrs. Diana—girls ripen apace—there are scarce five months between *miss* in

A COMIC OPERA. 61

in her mamma's arms, and *madam* in her husband's—thrifty plants, by Jupiter.

A I R XVII.

*Wives are made of little misses,
Just within their tender teens,
When they scarce know what it means;
Yet, if woman knows what bliss is,
Miss the secret quickly gleans.*

*Soon as slips, and infant trifles
Off the forward pert has thrown,
Girlish passions strait she stifles;
Woman, woman must be shewn.*

*Thus transform'd from bud to blossom,
Passion nurtures branch and root,
Nature fixes beauty's gloss on,
Fortune plucks the ripen'd fruit.*

D I A N A.

Oh lud!—hush! hush!—yonder's my lord and my young master coming down the walk—they'll be here in five minutes—what a quandary we should have been in, if I had not happened to look out—I would not be catch'd here for all the varfal world—let us intire into the servants hall, Mr. Simon,

S I M O N.

Any where, my sweet Diana, bring but a bottle with you.

D I A N A.

You, Patrick, must stay, and be taking away.

PATRICK,

PATRICK.

Ay, ay, my jewel, Patrick has not his lesson to learn—I'll be after putting them to rights presently.

S C E N E III.

LORD LEER, SIR JOHN WORTHY.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Why so soon, my lord?—don't you think it rather improper?

LORD LEER.

So soon!—improper!—ha! ha! ha!—that's very droll, I protest—who would ever think such a young fellow as you, would talk of being *too soon* in a fine girl's arms?—odd enough!—to be sure, Sir John, you must know very well the *secret spring* of that impropriety—do you think you should be tardy on such an occasion?

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

I should think, my lord, some little time were necessary for her to reflect on an affair of such moment.

LORD LEER.

Upon my word, Sir John, she is not so unreasonable—she has submitted herself implicitly to Lady Worthy, and is as anxious as I am—oh, she's a most affable, and engaging girl.

SIR

A COMIC OPERA. 63

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Is there, then, no faith in woman? deceitful
sex!

LORD LEER.

Besides, Sir John, Lady Worthy has got the
curate already in the house—he only waits
our commands—so, as soon as we get all to-
gether, we'll set him to work, and there's an
end on't—*Suivons l'amour*—(Singing)

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

'Sdeath! I shall go distracted—what could
induce my mother to act upon such rash, such
cruel inconsistencies?—you're not in earnest,
my lord.

LORD LEER.

In earnest!—faith, but I am; and you shall be
convinced of that, presently.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Impossible, my lord—why I never heard
of such a thing.

LORD LEER.

Then you shall see it, Sir John, that's all—
ha! ha! ha!—but, apropos!—you shall give
Laura away—eh! Sir John, will you do me
that honor?—you and she have been old ac-
quaintances—it will be vastly pretty, I protest
—quite in character—a very lucky thought,
that.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

I must beg, my lord, you would dispense
with my services on the occasion—I find my-
self

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self ill-disposed for such an office—I am not very well—my head is somewhat out of order, with my journey—I hope you'll excuse me if I am not present.

LORD LEER.

By no means, Sir John, I protest—come, come, don't be cast down with a little pain—I am sometimes a little troubled with a rheumatic disorder myself, when I am alone; but good company always expels it—gay as a lark, then—nothing like society, Sir John, nothing in the world.

S C E N E IV.

LORD LEER, SIR JOHN WORTHY, SIR CHARLES AIRY, LADY WORTHY, LAURA, BELINDA.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Death to my hopes!—'tis all too true—an unusual complacency sits upon her countenance, and an insulting gaiety is apparent in her whole deportment—oh, woman, woman, deluding sycophants!

LORD LEER.

(advancing fantastically towards Laura.

A I R XVIII.

*Fairest Laura,
Sweet as Flora,
Gayest of the vernal train,
Thus beholding,
Thus infolding,
Never shall we part again.*

Come,

A COMIC OPERA 65

Come, Mr. Priest, are you ready?—don't let us lose time——I long to have my happiness compleat.

BELINDA.

What a monster!—with your leave, my lord, I would just ask you a few questions, preliminary to this solemn ceremony; as there are some points in it, necessary to be known and expatiated on, which I ever think it incumbent on me to premise.

LORD LEER.

Ha! ha! ha!——points, indeed!——I don't want to settle matters of faith, Mr. Gravity——all the points I have to settle are with this little angel here——don't tell me of other points——allons——when you've done your duty, you shall have your reward, that's enough.

BELINDA.

But I must insist on their being attended to, my lord, or I will not proceed.

LORD LEER.

Well, well, your reverence, just as you please——be but explicit——come to the point at once——no circumlocution, I beseech you.

BELINDA.

I'll endeavour to oblige you.—First, my lord, were you ever married?

LORD LEER.

Ye——no, no,—but what is that to the purpose?—is that a point to be discussed?

K

BELINDA

BELINDA.

Certainly, my lord; it is a fundamental point; because the ceremony runs thus: you shall love your wife, and cherish her; and forsaking all others, cleave to her only, so long as ye *both* shall live——your lordship never was married, I think you said.

LORD LEER.

Yes, yes, I did say so——prithee don't trifle, good Mr. Priest.

BELINDA.

I don't mean to trifle, my lord; but I really supposed you were a widower——I had a certificate put into my hands this morning, of the burial of one Belinda, the wife of Robert, Lord Leer, and thought it might belong to your lordship; as you would no doubt take every precaution, to silence the tongue of obloquy, in an affair of such moment.

LORD LEER.

Very true——I protest I had quite forgot——the charming idea of the present had almost erased the past——the thing is mine, to be sure——what a lucky circumstance! how could he come by it?

BELINDA.

But, my lord——

LORD LEER.

What, in the name of mischief, is coming now?

BELINDA.

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BELINDA.

I beg your pardon, now I recollect, it is a certificate of your marriage with that lady——

LORD LEER.

The devil it is——I am sorry for that——

BELINDA.

Is not it, madam?——I think you have it.

LADY WORTHY.

Yes, I have——there it is, if your lordship will please to peruse it.

LORD LEER.

Hum, hum——to be sure, madam, th-this is very right; but I had the misfortune to lose her by the small pox——'faith, I'm afraid. I shall look very ridiculous, by and bye.

BELINDA.

And you would doubtless think it a happiness to find her again——all good men love their wives, you know, my lord——and lost things are sometimes restored.

LORD LEER.

If it were possible to restore the dead, sir, you might, perhaps, see in me the loving husband, too.

BELINDA.

[throwing off her disguise,

Here, then, let it be demonstrated——behold your wife restored.

K 2

LORD,

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LORD LEER.

Hell and confusion!—Belinda herself, as I live——what infernal spirit has brought about this?

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Happy disappointment!—my dear girl, I see, was apprized of it——she still looks gay.

BELINDA.

Don't you know me, my lord?—you were perfectly acquainted with me, *before you lost me by the small pox.*

A L L.

Ha! ha! ha!

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Come, come, my lord, never be cast down——you have now a wife ready coined, and without the expence of matrimonial fees, that's all.

LORD LEER.

I protest I never looked so small, in all my days——I wish I were at home again.

LADY WORTHY.

This is a strange affair, my lord——what do you say?—do you acknowledge the charge, or not?

LORD LEER.

Wh-Why——indeed madam I don't know what to say——I confess I am in the wrong——yes, yes, I am a villain, that's certain——dispose of me as you think proper—I am a rascal, a scoundrel, or just what you please——
do

do but forgive me, my dear ladies and gentlemen, upon my honor, I'll be very good all the rest of my life—but Belinda cannot pardon me—Lady Worthy will not—what shall I do?—how shall I reconcile—

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Hold, my lord—will you permit me, ladies, to be a mediator in this affair?—you may depend on my impartiality; and, if one may judge of his lordship's situation, he will not be averse to compromise matters as amicably as may be—we should not be inexorable—"to offend is human, to forgive divine."

LADY WORTHY.

To me his lordship might well have spared an apology—I have the least to do in it.

BELINDA.

I wish I could say so—but, as I only sought redress for the injuries I have suffered, and my lord has promised that, I shall be very willing to bury the past in oblivion, in proportion as the future shall produce proofs of his performance of it.

LORD LEER.

My dear Belinda, you are too good—my good Lady Worthy how much am I obliged to you, also—But, alas! what shall I say to the amiable Laura?—I can never be acquitted in her eyes—no, no, I am too culpable—I can never hope to receive my pardon from her—I protest I am a sad wretch—an infamous fellow!

LAURA.

L A U R A.

Pray, my lord, don't mention me—you must be sensible that I have been actuated intirely by a sense of duty to lady Worthy; therefore you have nothing to reproach yourself with on my account.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Now I'll appeal to Sir Charles Airy, if this is not rejecting my services; at least, invalidating my mediation.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Why I am of that opinion; therefore let us hear your proposals.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

First, then, my lord was resolved to have a wife this very afternoon—he has got one—that's settled—Lady Leer has been abandoned—my lord receives her again—she has been injured—my lord's penitential manner of promising restitution, tells me that's settled, also—Laura, only, remains unsatisfied—now, as my lord strongly solicited me to give her to him, if he will do me the same favor, I will, with the permission of my mother, make myself the happiest of men, in the possession of the most deserving woman—I am assured of Laura's compliance, from something more than *a sense of duty*.

LADY WORTHY.

My will can never be wanting, where my son's happiness is depending—take her—and may you ever taste the pure sweets of tranquillity.

SIR

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SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Thus, then——

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Hold, hold, Sir John, not so fast, if you please——you have not my consent, yet.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Your consent, sir!—what do you mean?

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

My consent!—yes, my consent——this lady and I have lately contracted a very great intimacy——in fact, we are more nearly allied than you may imagine.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

I should be sorry, Charles, if that were true——it would reflect no honor on her reputation, I am certain.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

For the truth of it, I appeal to the lady herself——speak, my dear girl.

L A U R A.

I assure you, Sir John, it is very true——and I shall think it my duty to love him, so long as I live.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Perdition seize me, then, if——

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Nay, nay, my dear Sir John, don't be in a passion——I'll explain it to you——I have only found

72 THE FAIR ORPHAN,

found out that Laura is my sister, that's the whole of the mystery.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Your sister!

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

'Tis even so.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

You amaze me——but pray how is that?

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

You shall know that afterwards——suffice it, for the present, that she really is my sister, and that I shall think myself honored in calling my old friend, brother—and, believe me, you'll find a strange reformation in your hopeful brother-in-law——but, come, permit me to join your hands, now, and let the priest (not that female priest tho') make the final junction.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

I thank you, sir——here all the hopes, fond passion could inspire, have eagerly centered——here I deposit, and bid adieu to, those anxious fears, the sad companions of despondence——henceforth I live to love, and to deserve the most amiable girl on earth.

LAURA.

How shall I express my gratitude, my joy, my love?——I have not power——let my silence, then, bear the highest construction of what I feel ineffable.

AIR

A I R XIX.

Sir John. *Haste, then, let consummation
Reward our mutual passion,
And make us truly blest.*

Laura. *On yours my will depending,
In love, alone, contending,
I yield when you request.*

Sir John. *Thus endearing
Transports sharing,*

Both. *Love both our souls unites.
What joy in these caresses!
Thus blest, and thus to blest, is
The purest of delights.*

S C E N E V.

LORD LEER, SIR JOHN WORTHY, SIR CHARLES
AIRY, LADY WORTHY, LAURA, BELINDA,
PATRICK, DIANA.

PATRICK.

An please your lords and ladyships, here's
Diana and I have been making up matters, and
so have agreed to come together.

LADY WORTHY.

And pray, Patrick, what is your will now you
are come together.

PATRICK.

Arrah, my lady, but you don't take me at
all, at all.

L

LADY;

LADY WORTHY.

What is your meaning, then?

PATRICK.

Why, as to that, an please your ladyship, it is to beg the favor of my lord Leer to lend us his licence, when he has done with it; because we have a great mind to be after marrying; and, by my shoul, my lady, but it will save a great deal of shillings in our pockets.

DIANA.

Yes, my lady, so it will, to be sure; and one doing will do for all, if his lordship will be so nificent.

LADY WORTHY.

Go, you stupid creatures—I wonder how such a preposterous notion could enter your heads.

PATRICK.

Deel burn me, my lady, but it did not enter my head, at all, at all; only Diana would make a fool of me, because, she said, it would be after saving expences.

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

Well, Patrick, since Diana has such good notions of œconomy, I'll pay the clergyman's fees for you, and make you a present of something towards housekeeping, besides—you've nothing to do but fix a day agreeable to yourselves.

DIANA.

I thank your honor, most infecusly—come, Patrick, let's go and hold a confidence about it.

SIR

A COMIC OPERA. 75

SIR JOHN WORTHY.

You may stay here, if you will——this is a holiday——all hearts shall rejoice.

SIR CHARLES AIRY.

Come, then, ladies and gentlemen, what do we stand about.—Cupid and Hymen are all abroad to day, you see——why don't you put a finishing hand to business, and give a loose to mirth and jollity?——Lord and Lady Leer, I wish you joy of your meeting——come, come, take heart——we must forget and forgive——Lady Worthy, I give you joy of your intended daughter——Sir John and Laura, I wish you all the happiness the conjugal state can bestow——and now I'll take joy to my self for such an unexpected happy event——well done Charles.

A I R XX.

*Now, adieu to vicious folly,
Welcome virtue's sov'reign joys!
Yet, a foe to melancholy,
I'll be merry, I'll be wise.
Thus to men benighted, viewing
Distant lights delusive rise,
Whilst the pleasing gleam pursuing,
Morn appears, the vapor dies.*

Belinda. *Since with penitence intreating
Pardon for the wrongs he's done,
Joy shall crown this happy meeting,
Hence my lord and I are one.*

L 2

Nature

*Nature frail is ever erring,
Yet those errors rectified,
Justice, then, her grace conferring,
Heals the wound on ev'ry side.*

*Sir John. Av'rice, gazing on the treasures
That within his coffers roll,
Tastes not half the secret pleasures
Now revolving in my soul:
All that's beautiful in nature
In one lovely girl combin'd,
Scarce the wond'ring eyes can reach her
Ere she captivates the mind.*

*Laura. Hence, no anxious fears invading,
Love shall tranquillize my breast;
Duty, thus affection leading,
Ev'ry scruple lulls to rest.
So the storm, destruction hurling,
Softens to a gentle breeze,
And, their swelling sails unfurling,
Ships with pleasure plow the seas.*

*Patrick. Now, my jewels, list to Patrick,
Since the am'rous tale's begun;
Matrimony is a sad trick,
If the maid's not fairly won;
If in courtship inclination
Bows, alone, to duty's call,
Wedlock's bands will bring vexation—
Gain her heart, or give up all.*

11 NO 68

END OF THE OPERA.

EPILOGUE,

By a friend of the Author:

Spoken by *Mr. Jackson.*

FROM age to age the comic Muse hath been
The pow'r supreme to exorcise the spleen;
To clear the vapours of the brain away,
The never-failing nostrum is—a play
Where wit and humour equal force have join'd
To laugh away th' imposthume of the mind:
But when she rises, bent on nobler views,
And, like my friend, a gen'rous aim pursues;
To combat vice in this licentious age,
To teach the pleasing moral from the stage,
The rising gusts of passion to controul,
To breathe instruction, and to form the soul,
On virtue's portrait all her art to shew,
To make her charms with native beauty glow;
Who views the scene, but ev'ry touch must feel?
Who loves not Indiana drawn by Steele?

This night, for you, ye blooming, lovely fair!

[to the Boxes,

Whom still the Muse shall make her choicest care,
Whose rip'ning charms her ev'ry thought engage,
For you the lovely Laura trod the stage. —————
When in her breast the rising passion strove,
When what was friendship ripen'd into love,
Swell'd in each pulse and thrill'd in ev'ry vein;
Say, cou'd you then the tyrant's pow'r restrain,

or

EPILOGUE.

Of each foud with the tortur'd soul divest,
Or tear the charming traitor from your breast?
Mistake me not, ye fair ones!—'tis a task
Too much for nature!—nor shall virtue ask
The noblest passion of the soul to spurn;
'Tis all she asks, this moral here to learn——
Your hearts with mild, attractive graces arm,
O! let your souls in virgin sweetness charm.——
Such Laura was, and should the maid impart
Joy to the sense, or touch the feeling heart,
From you let friendship ask a radiant smile,
To gild the scene, and bless the gen'rous toil;
Approve the man who fights in beauty's cause,
And pay the grateful tribute of applause.

Yet here, methinks, some little woud-be wit,
[to the Pit.

In conscious pride, the monarch of the pit,
Cries—there are faults!—why, so I told my friend;——
I own they're great—too great for *you* to mend.
Critics, be dumb!—or by the Gods! I swear,
I'll rouse the vengeance of th' applauding fair,
Pour the fierce torrent of their fury down,
And kill you with the tempest of a frown.

References to the *Airs* of those Operas, &c. to
the Music of which the *Airs* of this Opera are
adapted.

AIR.

- I. *Cease, oh cease, &c.* Maid of the Mill
- II. *Ab! why should fate, &c.* *ibid.*
- III. * *If that's all you want, &c.* *ibid.*
- IV. *O what a simpleton, &c.* *ibid.*
- V. *O what pleasures, &c.* Midas.
- VI. *All around the maypole, &c.* *ibid.*
- VII. *A plague of those wenches, &c.* Love in a Vill.
- VIII. *Let gay ones, &c.* *ibid.*
- IX. *Lovely nymph, &c.* Midas.
- X. *Hark, 'tis I, &c.* Maid of the Mill.
- XI. *Was ever poor fellow, &c.* Love in a Village.
- XII. *Cease gay seducers, &c.* *ibid.*
- XIII. *When late I wander'd, &c.* Tho. and Sally.
- XIV. *Well met, pretty maid, &c.* *ibid.*
- XV. * *Go forge me fetters, &c.* Padlock.
- XVI. *A pox of your potbers, &c.* Midas.
- XVII. *When a maid, &c.* Maid of the Mill.
- XVIII. Lady Coventry's Minuet.
- XIX. *My life, my joy, &c.* Maid of the Mill.
- XX. *Field who will, &c.* *ibid.*

* These two *Airs* are new set by Mr. R. Shy, Organist
of Lynn.

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